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ABSTRACT

The bargaining simulation unit is a useful educational tool in the introductory organizational communication course. It provides students with the opportunity to apply concepts such as communication, authority, and decision making already taught in the course, and teaches responsibility in analyzing, enacting, and discussing the bargaining case. The bargaining unit is designed as a four- to five-class period unit and includes six procedures. Students first read and discuss a chapter on negotiating groups. They then read the bargaining case, and choose, from a list of eight, three best options for handling the case. Based on their choices, students are then divided into the labor or management group. The two groups then participate in preliminary caucuses to arrive at one option as a whole. Next, the two groups present and negotiate their positions in a bargaining session. Students discuss the bargaining experience during a debriefing class period. In a final paper assignment, students broaden their understanding of the organizational concepts previously studied, and they describe and integrate their theoretical knowledge with their practical experiences. (Criteria and options for the written assignment, as well as a bargaining scenario are included.) (HTH)

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BARGAINING SIMULATION UNIT:

AN INSTRUCTIONAL TOOL FOR THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION COURSE

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BARGAINING SIMULATION UNIT:

AN INSTRUCTIONAL TOOL FOR THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION COURSE

The bargaining simulation is a useful educational tool in teaching the introductory organizational communication course. The primary goal of the simulation is to provide students with the opportunity to apply concepts already taught and discussed in the course. That is, the students draw upon concepts such as communication, purpose, authority, decision-making, and responsibility in the process of analyzing, enacting, and discussing the bargaining case. The true value of the bargaining simulation is that the students do more than discuss the case. Through this exercise, students take a position in regard to the case and develop their strategies for defending and arguing for that selected position.

Ideally, the bargaining simulation should be used later in the course so that students have the opportunity to develop an understanding of basic organizational communication concepts and be able to apply them in the simulation. We have developed a unit surrounding the simulation by devising a number of related assignments. The bargaining unit is designed as a four to five class period unit and includes the following six procedures:

1. Reading Assignment

First, students are asked to read a chapter from R. Payne and C. Cooper (eds.) Groups at Work (New York: John Wiley, 1981). The chapter, "Negotiating Groups," by John Carlisle and Malcolm Leary discusses the role of the group in this process and the skills necessary for conducting effective negotiations. One class period is devoted to a discussion of this piece and its relationship to previously discussed organizational communication concepts.

II. Bargaining Case

Near the end of the first class period copies of the bargaining case are distributed. Students are asked to read the case individually. After reading the case carefully, students are asked to examine the list of eight options for dealing with Jim's case and rank order their top three choices. These are then turned in to the instructor that same day before students leave the classroom. In between the first and second class periods of the unit, the instructor utilizes these rank orders to assign students in the class to two groups: labor and management. Students choosing options 1, 2, 3 are assigned to the labor team and students choosing options 5, 6, 7, or 8 are assigned to the management group. Those students selecting option 4 are assigned either to labor or management depending on the number of students already assigned to each group. That is, option 4 is utilized to even up the number of individuals in each group.

III. Preliminary Caucus

At the beginning of the second class period, the instructor divides the class into the labor and management groups. Once the students are divided into their groups, the instructor explains that the remainder of the class period will be used to develop their positions. Although members of the group may have chosen different options initially, they must now agree on an option as a group. The following procedures should be explained before the students begin to caucus and then explained once again during the next class period as they begin the actual simulation:

A. Don't get bogged down in details, e.g., the "marked" coins, coin box, etc.

B. Don't seek or bring in much additional evidence; argue primarily using what's there.

C. Neither group can call in Jim for his account.

D. Groups should set different points: (1) their "target point" -- that is, what they initially want in terms of a settlement -- their initial proposal, and (2) their "resistance point" -- the condition or proposal they would give in to -- the point where they would not back down any further.

E. Groups are not limited to the suggested solutions to the case; they should be creative.

F. Groups should select two negotiators-representatives; these persons can, however, be replaced at a later time.

G. Let groups caucus anytime, but limit the length of the meetings -- usually to about 5-10 minutes.

H. While negotiators are bargaining, other group members may not talk. They may pass notes to them.

I. The instructor can intervene anytime as a mediator.

All students are encouraged to take detailed notes of what occurs in the caucus as well as the actual bargaining sessions. These notes will be a valuable source of information for an understanding of both the bargaining process and the paper assignment that follows the bargaining simulation. Taperecording the sessions is a viable option for the students. One other option is for the instructor to tape record all sessions and then place the tapes on reserve for students to use in writing the paper assignment.

IV. Bargaining Simulation

The next one or two class periods should be utilized for the actual bargaining simulation. The above procedures should be explained briefly once again and any questions concerning the bargaining simulation should be discussed. Students are also reminded of the importance of notetaking. The simulation begins with each group presenting their proposal -- that is, what the group wants the company to do with Jim. Management opens with their proposal and labor follows with their proposal. The simulation proceeds as the two (or four) negotiators argue their position. Intermittent caucuses are

called by either side to discuss interaction and issues in the bargaining session. Ideally the groups should conduct the caucuses in separate rooms to facilitate open, nonthreatening discussion.

V. Debriefing

The final day of the unit is utilized for debriefing the bargaining simulation. Following is a list of possible discussion topics for conducting the debriefing:

A. Allow students to discuss general impressions of the activity.

B. Discuss the nature of bargaining -- reciprocation, fixed-sum and variable-sum approaches, escalation of conflict, etc.

C. Discuss intragroup versus intergroup negotiation (relate to Groups at Work chapter).

D. Discuss arguments, strategies, tactics used by both sides.

E. Discuss the activity in terms of Functions of the Executive -- e.g., the three key elements of organization (Purpose, Communication, and Willingness to Serve), incentives, authority, decision making.

F. Discuss communication distortion, labelling, perpetuation of images, etc.

VI. Paper Assignment

Toward the end of the debriefing, copies of the paper assignment are distributed and discussed. The purpose of this assignment is to broaden the student's understanding of the organizational concepts previously studied and discussed in the class. It provides the students with an opportunity to describe and integrate their theoretical knowledge with a practical experience. It fits well into our particular course in that the theoretical concepts discussed in Barnard's Functions of the Executive lend themself to application and discussion of the bargaining simulation. Following is a list of the criteria and options for the paper:

A. Criteria for Paper

1. It should be 7-8 double-spaced pages.
2. It should contain citations following direct quotations of more than a few words. Citations should be made as follows: "Quoted material" (Barnard, p. 77).
3. It should present clear arguments and specific examples (as evidence) from the simiulation experience.

B. Options for Paper

1. Explain how your negotiating team (labor or management) developed or failed to develop Barnard's three elements of formal organization: common purpose, a system of communication, and willingness to serve (see Chapter 7). Also, evaluate the relative effectiveness and efficiency of your group's efforts (See Barnard, especially, pp. 19-21, 55-59, 91-94).

2. Compare and contrast the intra-group negotiation with the inter-group negotiation which took place during the simulation. Use Carlisle and Leary's "Negotiating Groups" (handout) as a framework for understanding both types of negotiation. Apply any four concepts from their chapter (e.g., interdependence, timing, deadlock, defend-attack spiral), making sure at some point to comment on process (i.e., how the negotiations progressed) as well as outcome (e.g., the rsults of the negotiations).

3. Consider the inter-group negotiation in the simulation from the perspective of Barnard's Chapter 7, "The Economy of Incentives." Specifically, analyze how both methods of securing cooperation -- incentive and persuasion -- were employed during the negotiation sessions. Identify the specific methods referred to or actually employed during negotiation. For example, one side may have referred to the incentive "material inducements" while engaged in the "rationalization of opportunity" as a persuasive technique. Also, evaluate the relative effectiveness of the methods used.

4. Discuss the two groups in the simulation (management and labor) as competing for authority. Drawing from barnard's treatment of authority in Chapter 12, consider the position of each group with respect to an individual "employee." In addressing this question you would, as a member of the management team, consider how each group emerged or failed to emerge as authoritative -- from your point of view. Use as many concepts from Barnard's chapter as you can in developing your answer.

3. Analyze the decision-making process(es) used by your gorup (labor or management) in making the important initial choices: identifying purpose, selecting a negotiator-representative, arriving at a target point and a point of resistance. use Barnard's Chapters 13 and 14 as a framework and address questions such as: How were decisions made? Was there a cler delineation of means and ends? How was responsibility for decisions distributed? How well did the decision making approximate Barnard's "ideal" process?

These, then, are the six procedures that make up the bargaining simulation unit as we utilize it as an instructional tool in the organizational communication course. Our emphasis is placed upon the application and integration of Barnard's concepts as they relate to organizational communication. Yet, the bargaining simulation is a tool that may be incorporated into other types of organizational communication courses that utilize different textbooks. In other words, this is a flexible unit that allows for varying emphases depending upon the theoretical foundation. In addition, the bargaining simulation unit may be utilized in a course which primarily emphasizes skills. Thus, rather than focusing primarily on the integration of theoretical concepts, the unit could provide students with the opportunity to enact and discuss the practical skills previously taught within the course.

The bargaining simulation unit is a compact, yet flexible instructional tool that may be incorporated into a wide variety of organizational communication courses.

REFERENCES

Chester Barnard, The Functions of the Executive (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1938), p. 91.

John Carlisle and Malcolm Leary, "Negotiating Groups," in R. Payne and C. Cooper (eds.) Groups at Work (New York: John Wiley, 1981), 165-188.

BARGAINING SIMULATION TASK

On September 1, 1982, the Midwest Telephone Company hired a special agent to seek our the case of losses in coin-operated telephones at several installations. In addition, the company asked each supervisor and foreman to review with his repairmen, collectors, and installers, the rules and conduct of the company. These reules include a paragraph on dishonesty and on misuse and stealing of company property. The document also included a statement that " . . . violation of this code of conduct shall result in disciplinary action including possible dismissal."

On September 15, the special agent talked with Jim Smith, a repairman, about the problem of coin loss in the machines and asked Jim's help in advising how to improve the situation. Jim described the situation and made several suggestions.

Jim Smith is a repairman on coin-operated phones. He has 19 years of service with the company. He has, on several occasions turned in purses and other items of value including lost monies totallying over $300. Jim is known as a responsible member of the community. He is well-liked by his co-workers and is considered one of the leaders of his work group.

On December 9, another repairman, Hal Lingle, was apprehended with marked coins from a coin machine. Hal had 18 years of experience with the company but had been in that particular job for one month. Upon investigation of the situation, it was found that Hal had not been briefed on procedure for dealing with excess monies from the coin-operated phones and that there could be doubt as to his intent (although he had been $14 and $14 in marked coins on his person). The result was that Hal received a two-week disciplinary layoff. The management felt that their action would emphasize the seriousness of this problem and discourage similar incidents.

Immediately, thereafter, on December 10, the company sent specific instructions to all supervisors to review the conduct codes and procedures for hadnling excess monies with all the men. This was done.

On January 4, 1983, a new procedure for reporting excess monies in the machines was installed, and all repairmen were instructed as to the procedure. At that time, also, the repairmen were reviewed on teh conduct matter. Both the union and management stressed the importance of the review in order to reduce the likelihood that innocent mistakes would be considered intentional infractions of company policy.

On January 30, Jim Smith was assigned to repair a bank of machiens at a nearby military installation. As Jim checked the assignment, his supervisor talked with hom about how to handle excess monies and satisfied him that Jim knew the procedure.

On that same day, Jim was observed by the special agent taking surplus coins from a coin machine he was repairing. The coins were marked, but Jim had them converted into paper money.

On January 31, Jim was called into the central office where he admitted taking $15.80 in coins. He did not give a reason for taking these coins but asserted that for years coin-box repairmen had reimbursed themselves for their own coins used in testng telephones they had repaired. It was pointed out that such a procedure, even though practiced, was contrary to company policy. In fact, a speical instruction on self-reimbursement had been issued a month before which directed the employees to file a voucher for reimbursement of their funds used in testing.

As a result of Jim's action, the union and management representatives must decide what should be done in this case. The union is concerned with protecting its employees and in maintaining some control over the disciplinary policies used by management. Jim's popularity in the union and his seniority as a company worker increased the impact that severe disicplinary action would have on the power and image of the union. The union does not want management to have the power to discipline arbitrarily union members in such cases; therefore, they view this case as critical int erms ofs etting a precedent. On the other hand, management is faced with a loss of control and a loss of face if Jim's case is dismissed without some disciplinary action. In light of past incidences, specifically the case of Hal Lingle, management feels that some significant action is requied.

Both the union and management face the threat of a strike by the union or a significant loss of power for one of the parties if the final solution is not agreeable to both parties. A strike would have significant negative consequences for both parties. However, each side is very concerned with retaining power over disciplinary actions. As the union and management representatives, you are to decide what action should be taken in Jim's case. If agreement is not reached, both sides face the reality of a strike or of submitting this case to an arbitrator who would make the final decision, thereby removing power from both sides.

The following are some options for dealing with Jim's case.

1. Let the matter rest. Jim is a good worker and citizen and should not cause more trouble. This event was a real shock to <u>him</u>.

2. Reprimand Jim and discuss the matter carefully with him.

3. Repirmand Jim and give him a warning that another violation will result in dismissal.

4. Reprimand Jim and demote him to a lower paid position for one week after which time we may return to his regular job.

5. Give Jim a disciplinary layoff of one week.

6. Give Jim a disciplinary layoff of three weeks.

7. Give Jim a disciplinary layoff of three weeks and demote him upon return.

8. Discharge Jim on the basis of clear violation of rules of conduct, company policy, and because he had been specificialy informed of the rules since the last event of coin larceny had occurred.

COMMUNICATION 324

COMMUNICATION BEHAVIOR IN ORGANIZATIONS

TEXTS

Barnard, Chester I. The Functions of the Executive. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968 (Barnard).

Frost, Peter J., Vance F. Mitchell, Walter R. Nord. Organizational Reality: Reports From the Firing Line. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1982 (2nd edition) (FMN).

ADDITIONAL READINGS -- (on reserve in the Undergraduate Library)

Johnson, Bonnie McDaniel. Communication: The Process of Organizing. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1977.

Kanter, R. M. Men and Women of the Corporation. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1981.

Koehler, Jerry W., Karl W. E. Anatol, and Ronald L. Applbaum. Organizational Communication: Behavioral Perspectives, 2nd edition. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1981.

Louis, M. R. Surprise and Sensemaking: What Newcomers Experience in Entering Unfamiliar Organizational Settings. Administrative Science Quarterly, 1980, 226-251.

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Peters, T. L. and R. H. Waterman, Jr. In Search of Excellence: Lessons From America's Best Run Organizations. New York: Harper & Row, 1982.

Putnam, L. L. and Cheney, G. Organizational Communication: Historical Development and Future Directions. In T. W. Benson (ed.) Speech Communication in the Twentieth Century. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, in press.

Putnam, L. L. and M. E. Pacanowsky (Eds.). Communication and Organizations: An Interpretive Approach. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1983.

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Simon, H. A. Administrative Behavior: A Study of Decision-Making Processes in Administrative Organization, 3rd edition. New York: Free Press, 1976.

Terkel, Studs. Working, 1st edition. New York: Avon Books, 1972.

Tompkins, P. K. Communication As Action. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1982.

Tompkins, P. K., G. Cheney and E.V.B. Tompkins. Toward a Theory of Unobtrusive Control in Contemporary organization; in P. K. Tompkins and R. D. McPhee, (eds.). Organizational Communication: Reviews and New Directions. Beverly Hills, in press.

Van Maanen, J. People Processing: Strategies of Organizational Socialization. Organizational Dynamics, Summer 1978.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To achieve understanding of the interwove processes of communication and organizing.

2. To provide students with the opportunity to make informed choice on the basic issues in organizational theory and practice.

COURSE POLICIES

Active student participation (in the form of contribution to discussion and involvement in exercises) is instrumental for the success of this course; therefore, attendance is strongly encouraged. Students are allowed 3 unexcused absences; after that, 10 points will be lost for each day missed. Late assignments are strongly discouraged; 10 points will be lost for each day past the deadline. Tests can only be rescheduled under extraordinary circumstances (e.g., nuclear holocaust)

COURSE GRADING

We will use a point system in this course. The various assignments, their due dates, and their corresponding possible points are listed below.

Abstract and Critique -- (approximately 4 pages)	To be Scheduled	50 points
Exam 1 -- (variety of questions)	February 17	100 points
Exam 2 -- (variety of questions)	April 6	100 points
Exam 3 -- (variety of questions)	Finals Week	100 points
Paper 1 -- (approximately 7-8 pages)	February 8	75 points
Paper 2 -- (approximately 7-8 pages)	April 16	75 points
	TOTAL	500 points

Grades will be calculated as follows:

450 -- 500	A
400 -- 449	B
350 -- 399	C
300 -- 349	D
299 and Under	F

SCHEDULE FOR THE SEMESTER

DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
January 9	Course Orientation	
January 11	History of organizations and organizational study. Lecture on Putnam & Cheney.	
January 13	Continue history and development	
January 16	Introduction to Barnard	Tompkins (handout)
January 18	Continue introduction to Barnard	Skim Barnard, Ch. 1-5
January 20	The bases of cooperative action	Barnard, Ch. 1-5
January 23	More on Cooperative Action	FMN, 393-402; 227-233; 240-242; 247-256
January 25	Cooperative action continued	FMN, 95-106; 432-440
January 27	Discussion and debate over Part I of Barnard	
January 30	Discussion and debate continued	
February 1	Definition and theory of formal organization	Barnard, Ch. 6 & 7
February 3	More on formal organization	Barnard, Ch. 8
February 6	More on formal organization	FMN, 487-493; 497-512; 549-558
February 8	Theory of informal organization	Barnard, Ch. 9 **PAPER 1 DUE**
February 10	More on informal organization	FMN, 192-197; 198-203; 286-294; 372-377
February 13	Discussion and debate over Part II Barbard	Skim Barnard, Ch. 6-9
February 15	Review for Exam 1	Review Barnard and FMN
February 17	**EXAM 1**	
February 20	Specialization	Barnard, Ch. 10
February 22	Economy of incentives	Barnard, Ch. 11
February 24	More on specialization and incentives	FMN, 137-149; 219-222; 282-285
February 27	Theory of Authority and Power	Barnard, Ch. 12
February 29	More on authority and power	FMN, 258-270; 332-345
March 2	More on authority and power	Kanter, 164-205
March 5 - 9	S P R I N G B R E A K	S P R I N G B R E A K
March 12	Film: "The Effective Uses of Power and Authority"	
March 14	Environment of Decision	Barnard, Ch. 13
March 16	More on environment of decision	FMN, 349-359; 514-424

March 19	The decision-making process: discuss extensions of Simon	Barnard, Ch. 14 Simon, intro & Ch. 1
March 21	Introduce Simulation	Payne & Cooper, 165-190
March 23	Simulation	
March 26	Simulation	Review Barnard & FMN
March 28	Simulation	
March 30	Simulation	
April 2	Debrief and discuss simulation Assign Paper 2	
April 4	Review for Exam 2	Review Barnard, FMN, Kanter, Simon, Payne & Cooper
April 6	**EXAM 2**	
April 9	The executive process and function	Barnard, Ch. 15
April 11	Executive functions continued	Barnard, Ch. 16
April 13	Executive functions continued Lecture on Tompkin's case studies	FMN, 6-16; 16-30; 61-69; 84-94; 109-111; 111-118; 162-174
April 16	Executive responsibility and organizational ethics	Barnard, Ch. 17 PAPER 2 DUE
April 18	More on executive responsibility	FMN, 122-127; 128-136; 441-450; 451-453
April 20	More on organizational ethics Lecture, Tompkins, Cheney, Tompkins	
April 23	Conclusion of Course	Barnard, Ch. 18
April 25	Organizations as cultures	Pacanowsky & O.T.; Peter and Waterman, Intro & Ch. 1
April 27	Review for final exam and course and instructor evaluations	Review all readings
FINAL EXAM	**FINALS WEEK APRIL 30 -- MAY 5**	